

San José Bill of Responsibilities for Youth

All children and youth have a right to be safe, healthy, successful in learning and successful in life. San José is enriched by the diversity of its children and youth and is committed to providing all youth with the same fundamental rights. In order to benefit from these rights, we must ensure all youth realize the same responsibilities they have in ensuring they grow up to be healthy, engaged, and educated citizens. Therefore we resolve to support our community so that as a youth living in San José:



Article 1: I am responsible for maintaining a healthy lifestyle, spirit, and mind.

- ◆ Keep schoolwork and extracurricular activities balanced
- ◆ Refrain from underage smoking, drinking, and illegal drug use
- ◆ Have a good attitude and positive outlook on life
- ◆ Strive to have a well balanced diet and drink an adequate amount of water
- ◆ Incorporate at least 30 minutes of physical activity per day

Article 2: I am responsible for becoming a self-sufficient, active, and engaged citizen in my community.

- ◆ Learn and build time-management and multi-tasking skills
- ◆ Give back to my community through volunteer service
- ◆ Learn how to voice my opinion on matters that affect me
- ◆ Challenge myself to have a positive outlook on life

Article 3: I am responsible for valuing an education that promotes success and develops a love of learning.

- ◆ Take school seriously by doing my best on all school assignments and tests
- ◆ Commit the adequate amount of time to finish assignments and prepare for assignments
- ◆ Take advantage of resources that will enhance and/or support my academics
- ◆ Get help when I feel that I am falling behind or need extra support

Article 4: I am responsible for seeking appropriate working environments if and when I choose to seek employment.

- ◆ Find a job that does not interfere with school
- ◆ Balance work with academic success
- ◆ Seek out a job that is fulfilling to my wellbeing

Article 5: I am responsible for voicing my opinion and encouraging my peers to voice our opinions in matters that affect us.

- ◆ Encourage other youth to voice their opinions
- ◆ Speak up when I feel that something is unfair and/or unjust
- ◆ Express my opinions to trusted adults and peers
- ◆ Voice my opinion in a way that does not disrespect others

San José Youth Commission Recommendations

The San José Youth Commission is a council-appointed body of 11 youth, 14-20 years old, modeled after the City of San José City Council. The Commissioners are recognized as the official youth advisory group to the City Council and the Department of Parks, Recreation, and Neighborhood Services. The role of the Youth Commission is to make policy recommendations pertaining to the City's youth.

Commissioners support the development of youth who desire to serve their community through active, civic participation and constructive decision making by maintaining a Youth Advisory Council in their district. The San José Youth Commission is dedicated to ensuring that the youth voice in San José is represented.

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Article 6: I am responsible for maintaining a safe and healthy environment at school, in my neighborhood, and in my community.

- ◆ Follow the rules at school and the laws of the city
- ◆ Promote a positive school culture by treating everyone with equal respect
- ◆ Speak up when students are bullied at my school and in my neighborhood
- ◆ Keep my community safe, clean, and welcoming towards others

Article 7: I am responsible for maintaining relationships with caring, trusting, and supportive adults.

- ◆ Respect adults in my family, school, and community who provide me with support, care, and trust
- ◆ Be open to creating relationships with trusting adults
- ◆ Work alongside adults to create solutions to youth-related issues

Article 8: I am responsible for fostering positive peer influence by modeling good behavior.

- ◆ Give my peers encouragement and praise when they achieve their goals
- ◆ Educate my peers about the consequences of risky behavior
- ◆ Treat all people fairly and respectfully
- ◆ Choose my activities carefully to preserve my integrity and leadership
- ◆ Serve as a mentor to my siblings, family members, and peers

Article 9: I am responsible for treating all youth with an equal amount of respect

- ◆ Do not discriminate against anyone on the basis of race, gender, religion, national or ethnic origin, sexual orientation, disability, culture, or appearance
- ◆ Speak up when someone is being discriminated against
- ◆ Have a cultural awareness that reflects the diversity in my community

San José Youth Commission Recommendations

The San Mateo Youth Commission and Peninsula Partnership Leadership Council developed the first version of the Children and Youth Bill of Rights in 2008.

In 2009, this document was adopted at the California State level. The San José Youth Commission adopted the San Mateo Youth Commission's version and added two additional articles to reflect the diversity of San José Youth.

The San José Bill of Rights for Children and Youth was adopted by San José City Council on March 18th 2010. At this time, Mayor Chuck Reed challenged the Youth Commission to right a Bill of Responsibilities for children and youth. The Commission accepted this challenge; the Bill of Responsibilities was created in collaboration with youth from all over San José.